

Celebrating the crème de la crème of NY dining

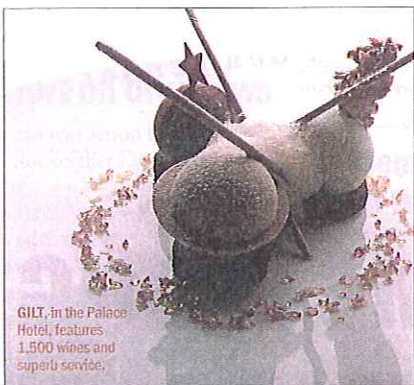
Revisiting Bob Lape's top-rated restaurants, from Park Slope to midtown to Yonkers

FOLLOWING ARE updated summaries of the top-rated restaurants reviewed in *Crain's* by critic Bob Lape during 2007. Restaurants are listed by number of stars received; they are alphabetized within each rating category.



Gilt

New York Palace Hotel, 455 Madison Ave. (between East 50th and East 51st streets), Manhattan. (212) 891-8100. A new kick in the kitchen, 1,500 wines and superb service boost this 51-seat restaurant to the top of New York's modern American dining experiences.



GILT, in the Palace Hotel, features 1,500 wines and superb service.

Monteverde at Oldstone Manor

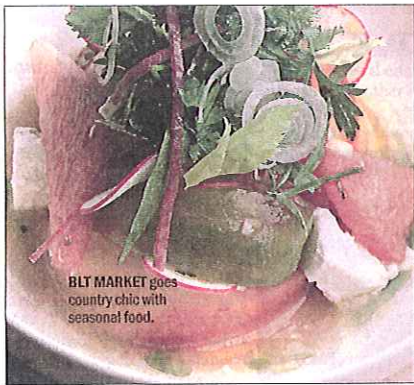
28 Bear Mountain Bridge Road (Route 6), Cortlandt Manor, N.Y. (914) 739-5000. Chef Neil Ferguson and service ace Glenn Vogt spark a memorable transformation of the 1760 Van Cortlandt mansion high above the Hudson. Wonderful modern American food, stunning views.



MONTEVERDE AT OLDSTONE MANOR transforms a mansion over the Hudson.

X20 Xaviars on the Hudson

71 Water Grant St., Yonkers. (914) 965-1111. Peter Xaviar Kelly returns to his hometown with a world-class dining destination literally in the river, at the Yonkers Recreation Pier. Contemporary American cuisine, top service, great views—the works.



BLT MARKET goes country chic with seasonal food.



X20 XAVIARS ON THE HUDSON brings fine dining to a river pier.



BLT Market

The Ritz-Carlton New York, 1430 Sixth Ave. (at Central Park South), Manhattan. (212) 521-6125. The Bistro Laurent Tourondel team scores again, big-time, in the former Atelier space at Central Park and Sixth Avenue. Country chic decor, seasonal new American food, attentive service and 610 wines.



Anthos

36 W. 52nd St. (between Fifth and Sixth avenues), Manhattan. (212) 582-6900. It's Donatella Arpaia and chef Michael Psilakis (Dona) again, as the youthful chef makes a bid to gain for modern Greek cuisine the same respect accorded French, Italian and Spanish cooking.

Axia Taverna

18 Piermont Road, Tenafly, N.J. (201) 569-5999. A highly appealing new Greek restaurant from builder Michael Parlamis, whose firm has

done a thousand of them. Designed by Tony Chi, the location features impressive modern cuisine and stylish surroundings.

Four Food Studio and Cocktail Salon

515 Broadhollow Road (Route 110), Melville, L.I. (631) 577-4444. New chef James McDevitt gives an Asian-American savory charge to this \$4 million showplace, featuring seasonal decor and menus. One of the Island's best for food and drink.

Gordon Ramsay at The London

The London NYC hotel, 151 W. 54th St. (between Sixth and Seventh avenues), Manhattan. (212) 468-8888. Cool elegance and meticulously prepared and served modern French food are the hallmarks of the noted Scottish chef's first American outpost. No fireworks, just smooth sailing in a serene, small room.

Kobe Club

68 W. 58th St. (between Fifth and Sixth avenues), Manhattan. (212) 644-5623. The best cuts from Japan, Australia and the United States are served under 2,000 samurai swords suspended from the ceiling of this sensuous, red-hot steakhouse. Exciting design, great beef.

L'Impero

45 Tudor City Place (between East 42nd and East 43rd streets), Manhattan. (212) 599-5045. Chef Michael White brings his full-flavored contemporary Italian cooking to

this handsome East Sider. House-made pasta, seafood and chicken dishes are standouts, backed by smooth service and a deep wine list.

Park Avenue Winter

100 E. 63rd Street (at Park Avenue), Manhattan. (212) 644-1900. From Quality Meats' son-father team of Michael and Alan Stillman, a truly seasonal restaurant, with new decor, food and wine every three months. Chef Craig Koketsu and pastry dynamo Richard Leach team up to offer a flavorful focus with the freshest ingredients.

Primehouse

381 Park Ave. South (at East 27th Street), Manhattan. (212) 824-2600. Steve Hanson's cool mod steakhouse is blazing hot, serving beef spawned by its own prize bull. Chef Jason Miller ace meats and fish; Elizabeth Katz lays on doughnuts, soufflés and killer chocolate cakes.

Rayuela

165 Allen St. (between Stanton and Rivington streets), Manhattan. (212) 253-8840. This chic "freestyle Latino" restaurant has an olive tree growing through it. Chef Maximo Tejada lights up the Lower East Side with creative cookery from all of Latin America and Spain.



Al Di La

248 Fifth Ave. (at Carroll Street), Brooklyn. (718) 783-4565. Chef Anna

Klinger's Venetian-accented cooking makes this Park Slope eatery a perennial hot ticket. The no-reservations policy means a pleasant wait at the spot's nearby wine bar.

Besito

402 New York Ave., Huntington, L.I. (631) 549-0100. Restaurateur John Tunney's colorful, trailblazing upscale Mexican restaurant brims with noise, fun, tequilas and chef Matthew Lake's zesty food.

Dennis Foy

313 Church St. (between Lispenard and Walker streets), Manhattan. (212) 625-1007. A culinary pioneer returns to Manhattan with an artful, sophisticated contemporary American restaurant.

Esca

402 W. 43rd St. (west of Ninth Avenue), Manhattan. (212) 564-7272. New York's best spot for raw seafood, Italian coastal-style, plus respectful cooking of all kinds of fish—some caught by chef Dave Pasternack himself.

Hudson River Café

697 W. 133rd St. (at 12th Avenue), Manhattan. (212) 491-9111. A spiffy double-patio, modern American restaurant next to Fairway. Chef Ricardo Cardona (Lu) offers a menu ranging from Kobe beef burgers and Buffalo shrimp to rabbit- and chorizo-laden paella.

La Cantina Toscana

1109 First Ave. (between East 60th

and East 61st streets), Manhattan. (212) 754-5454. Perhaps New York's purest Florentine food, in a casual 38-seat hideaway. Wild game, offal, 200 wines, and baby eels for \$10.95.

Lucy of Gramercy

35 E. 18th St. (between Broadway and Park Avenue South), Manhattan. (212) 475-5829. Chef Carmen Gonzalez mixes crispy, crunchy Puerto Rican street food with sophisticated island cuisine in newly refurbished, stylish surroundings in the ABC Carpet & Home building.

Mai House

186 Franklin St. (between Hudson and Greenwich streets), Manhattan. (212) 431-0606. Drew Nieporent teams with chef Michael Huynh to deliver exciting modern Vietnamese food in a lively ethnic setting.

Pamplona

37 E. 28th St., (between Madison Avenue and Park Avenue South), Manhattan. (212) 213-2328. Chef Alex Ureña does "traditional Spanish" dishes with as much flair as anyone in town. From inspired tapas to roast suckling pig or hamburguesa with chorizo blended with beef, taste is king.

Tini

1562 Second Ave. (at East 81st Street), Manhattan. (212) 628-3131. The Lentini brothers—host Enzo and chef Giuseppe—offer an informal, lighter, seafood-rich take on the food of their native Puglia. A raw bar serves Mare-Tinis; the regular bar makes 20 Mar-Tinis.

Toloache

251 W. 50th St. (between Broadway and Eighth Avenue), Manhattan. (212) 581-1818. Chef Julian Medina's contemporary Mexican restaurant is complete with guacamole trios, rib-eye ceviche, roast suckling pig, terrific tacos and even Oaxacan grasshoppers—dried, with lime and jalapeños. A noisy, colorful and fun stage of the savory.

Valbella Steakhouse

754 White Plains Road (next to Lord & Taylor), Scarsdale, N.Y. (914) 725-0566. The latest version of the Manhattan and Greenwich, Conn., eateries with everything large—prime meats and lobsters, roomy seating, warm hospitality and fresh-baked desserts. ■

- ★★★★ = Outstanding
- ★★★★ = Excellent
- ★★★ = Very good
- ★ = Good

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